

RCMP FYI – Continued blockade action at Emerson, Manitoba border crossing

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Good afternoon

Please see the heads' up from the RCMP below.

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Please note the below information from Manitoba RCMP (D Div).

Issue:

- Trucks and farm implements continue to block the Canada/US border at Emerson, Manitoba in protest of the mandates in place for COVID-19
- Local, national, and international media have been inquiring about RCMP response to the situation at the border
- Local media has been attending the scene. Those involved with the protest would not speak to media. Media interviewed truckers stuck at the border waiting to cross and there was very little support for the blockade amongst those spoken to
- Our members on scene continue to ensure public safety while DLTs continue discussions with organizers
- Slow roll protests are planned for several locations throughout the southern part of the province this weekend

Background:

- Announcement of a significant loosening of health restrictions in Manitoba may cause less interest in the support protests planned
- The demonstration at the Manitoba Legislature that has been ongoing for several days is continuing
- Winter road conditions and cold temperatures continue to be a factor. The highway leading to the border at Emerson had been shut down for a period purely due to dangerous driving conditions. The road is open now

Strategic Considerations:

- Messaging needs to be on point with what is being said nationally
- The Media Relations Office has on call personnel designated and is prepared to provide interviews and address any issues over the weekend
- Recent comments on both a provincial level as well as a national level, with the Prime Minister now calling the protests illegal, could affect messaging and the public reaction to the protests

Communications Activities:

- A press release is going out this afternoon (copied below) addressing what is happening at the border and will be sent to our distribution list as well as inquiring national and international media
- A social media post is going out the same time as the press release. Comments will be disabled on the Facebook post

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Blockade continuing to block border in Emerson

Semi-trailers, farm implements, and passenger vehicles blocked the Canada/United States border at Emerson, Manitoba in the early morning hours of February 10, 2022. Officers from the Emerson and Morris RCMP detachments have been on scene since the arrival of the vehicles, and have received assistance from other RCMP detachments and units throughout the province.

The Manitoba RCMP immediately dispatched Divisional Liaison Officers to the scene, and they are working with the protestors to reach a peaceful resolution.

There are approximately 50 vehicles taking part in the blockade. That number has been fluctuating as vehicles leave and arrive.

Emergency vehicles, including police vehicles, as well as some agriculture transports have been getting through the blockade, but otherwise there is no traffic flow in the area. Police are advising motorists to expect substantial delays in the area and to avoid the Emerson area, if possible.

No tickets have been issued. No arrests have been made.

"We understand and appreciate the frustrations felt by everyone involved and everyone affected," said Chief Superintendent Rob Hill, Officer in Charge of Criminal Operations for the Manitoba RCMP. "The role of the RCMP is to ensure public safety and keep the peace while balancing the rights afforded to every Canadian under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"The RCMP is on scene and will remain on scene until the situation at the border is resolved. We will continue to use discretion to guide our response to this evolving situation. Let me stress that proper use of police discretion should not be confused with lack of enforcement. We always need to assess the situation at ground level and that may require us to wait for a lower-risk opportunity to do enforcement rather than inflame the situation."

Officers are aware of a number of planned demonstrations throughout the province this weekend and are advising the public to expect delays due to convoys in the areas of Deacons Corner in the RM of Springfield, the Perimeter Highway around Winnipeg, Highway 3 in the Morden area, and the Selkirk area.

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